

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint; ~~preferably for use in vehicles;~~  
especially in the area of the chassis of motor vehicles comprising:

with a ball and socket joint housing having a joint opening; ~~with~~ ;

\_\_\_\_\_ a ball pivot, which is arranged in the ball and socket joint housing, extends through the  
joint opening and with which a shaft is made integral; ~~with~~;

a support ring arranged on the shaft of the ball pivot and

with a sealing element, which is arranged between the support ring and a connection  
component surrounding the shaft of the ball pivot; ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein said sealing  
element ~~is designed as comprises~~ an elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body (+5);  
whose having an effective cross section, which is free from the effect of forces, that is limited  
by a continuously extending, curved contour (+9), which is subject to deformation in the  
installed state, as a result of which at least a partial area of said contour (+9) is in contact with  
adjoining areas (+10, +13, +14) that are to be sealed.

2. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1,  
~~characterized in that the~~ wherein said elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body (+5)  
has a profiled basic body (+6) and sealing segments (+8).

3. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 2,  
~~characterized in that the~~ wherein said sealing segments (+8) extend radially oriented in relation

to said profiled basic body (16).

4. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 2 ~~or 3~~, characterized in that the wherein transition areas (17) are provided for connecting said profiled basic body (16) to said sealing segments (18).

5. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 4, characterized in that the wherein a material or a material combination that permits elastic deflection of said sealing segments (18) adjoining said transition area (17) is selected for said transition area (17).

6. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with ~~one of the above~~ claims claim 1, characterized in that the wherein said profiled body (15) has a connection surface, via which said profiled body (15) is connected to an adjoining component (5, 13).

7. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, characterized in that the wherein said adjoining component is said support ring (5).

8. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6 ~~or 7~~, characterized in that the wherein the connection between said profiled body (15) and said adjoining component (5, 13) is established by vulcanization or bonding.

9. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, characterized in that the wherein said profiled body (15) is positioned on said ball pivot (1) or said support ring (5) in preparation for the mounting of said ball and socket joint.

10. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 9, characterized in that the wherein said profiled body (15) is positioned on said adjoining component (1, 10, 5, 13) ~~in question~~ as a result of a radial expansion of said profiled body (15) by positive-locking connection or non-positive connection with said adjoining component.

11. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, characterized in that the wherein said support ring (5) has a radially extending flange (13), with which at least one said sealing segment (18) of said profiled body (15) is in contact under pretension.

12. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1 ~~or 11~~, characterized in that the wherein said support ring (5) has a radially extending flange (13), with a radially outer front surface (20) of which at least one said sealing segment (18) of said profiled body (15) is in contact under pretension.

13. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with ~~one of the above~~ claims claim 1, characterized in that the wherein said profiled body (15) has at least one

stabilizing element (21).

14. (New) A motor vehicles chassis ball and socket joint comprising:

a ball and socket joint housing having a joint opening;

a ball pivot comprising a ball portion arranged in said ball and socket joint housing and  
an integral shaft portion arranged outside of said ball and socket joint housing, said shaft  
5 portion having an area to be sealed;

a support ring on said shaft portion, said support ring having an area to be sealed;

a connection component surrounding said shaft portion, said connection component  
having an area to be sealed;

a sealing element arranged between said support ring and said connection component,  
10 said sealing element comprising an elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body having  
an effective cross section in a state not affected by compressive or tensile forces, said effective  
cross section having a continuously extending curved contour subject to deformation in the  
installed state, said sealing element having at least a partial area of said contour in contact with  
said area to be sealed of said support ring, said area to be sealed of said shaft portion and said  
15 area to be sealed of said connection component.

15. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said elastically  
and/or plastically deformable profiled body has a profiled basic body and sealing segments  
extending radially in relation to said profiled basic body.

16. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 15, wherein said profiled body includes transition areas connecting said profiled basic body to said sealing segments.

17. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said contact between said profiled body and one of said areas to be sealed comprises a connection established by vulcanization or bonding.

18. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said support ring has a radially extending flange having said area to be sealed of said ring, said radially extending flange being in contact with said profiled body under pretension or compression.

19. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said profiled body has at least one stabilizing element.